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General Assembly

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Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 87 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/57/532/Add.2)*]

57/255. International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 52/200 of 18 December 1997, 53/185 of 15 December 1998, 54/220 of 22 December 1999, 55/197 of 20 December 2000 and 56/194 of 21 December 2001 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/46 of 28 July 1999, 1999/63 of 30 July 1999 and 2000/33 of 28 July 2000,

Reaffirming the importance of developing strategies at the national, subregional, regional and international levels that aim to prevent, mitigate and repair the damage caused by natural disasters that result from the El Niño phenomenon,

Taking into account the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development[1] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[2]

Noting with interest the partnership initiatives voluntarily undertaken by some Governments, international organizations and major groups, and announced at the Summit,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[3]

2. *Welcomes* the efforts undertaken by the Government of Ecuador, in cooperation with the World Meteorological Organization and the inter-agency secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, towards the establishment of the International Centre for the Study of the El Niño Phenomenon at Guayaquil, Ecuador, and the announcement made regarding its opening in January 2003, and encourages all parties to continue their joint efforts for the development of the Centre;

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[1] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[2] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

[3] A/57/189.

3. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General and the relevant funds, programmes and organizations of the United Nations system, in particular those taking part in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and encourages the international community, to adopt, as appropriate, the necessary measures to support the establishment of the above-mentioned research Centre at Guayaquil, and invites the international community to provide scientific, technical and financial assistance and cooperation for this purpose, as well as to strengthen, as appropriate, other centres devoted to the study of the El Niño phenomenon;

4. *Encourages* the Centre, once established, to strengthen its links, as appropriate, with national meteorological and hydrologic services of the Latin American region, the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific, the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research and the International Research Institute for Climate Prediction, as well as with other relevant regional and global organizations that study climate, such as the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts, the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development, the Drought Monitoring Centre and the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research, and other relevant centres as appropriate, in order to ensure the effective and efficient use of the available resources;

5. *Invites* the Secretary-General, with the assistance of the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction, to ensure that measures needed to address more effectively extreme meteorological and hydrologic events like the El Niño phenomenon are considered appropriately in the 2004 review of the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action;[4]

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue the full implementation of its resolutions 52/200, 53/185, 54/220, 55/197 and 56/194 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/46, 1999/63 and 2000/33;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session on the implementation of the present resolution, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

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[4] A/CONF.172/9, chap. I, resolution I, annex I.

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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/57/532/Add.2)*]

57/256. International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/236 of 22 December 1989, 49/22 A of 2 December 1994, 49/22 B of 20 December 1994, 53/185 of 15 December 1998, 54/219 of 22 December 1999 and 56/195 of 21 December 2001 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63 of 30 July 1999, and taking note of Council resolution 2001/35 of 26 July 2001,

Emphasizing the multisectoral, interdisciplinary and cross-cutting nature of natural disaster reduction, and stressing that continued interaction, cooperation and partnerships among the institutions concerned are considered essential to achieving jointly agreed objectives and priorities,

Expressing its deep concern at the increasing number and scale of natural disasters within recent years, which have resulted in massive loss of life and long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences for vulnerable societies throughout the world, in particular in developing countries,

Recognizing that disaster reduction, including reducing vulnerability to natural disasters, is an important element that contributes to the achievement of sustainable development,

Recalling that the annual observance of the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction is on the second Wednesday of October,

Recalling also the results, including the lessons learned, of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, outlined in the Geneva mandate on disaster reduction and the strategy document entitled "A safer world in the twenty-first century: risk and disaster reduction",[1]

Reiterating that, although natural disasters damage the social and economic infrastructure of all countries, the long-term consequences of natural disasters are especially severe for developing countries and hamper the achievement of their sustainable development,

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[1] Adopted at the programme forum on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, held at Geneva from 5 to 9 July 1999.

Stressing the need for Governments to continue to cooperate and coordinate their efforts in the field of natural disasters, in line with their respective skills and capacities, from prevention to early warning, response, mitigation, rehabilitation and reconstruction, inter alia, through capacity-building at all levels, where appropriate within the framework for action for the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction,[2]

Stressing also the need for Governments to continue to cooperate and coordinate their efforts with the United Nations system, other international organizations, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and other partners, as appropriate, in order to ensure effective synergies in the field of natural disasters,

Recognizing the urgent need to further develop and make use of the existing scientific and technical knowledge to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters, and emphasizing the need for developing countries to have access to technology so as to tackle natural disasters effectively,

Recognizing also the need to continue to develop an understanding of, and to address, socio-economic activities that exacerbate the vulnerability of societies to natural disasters and to build and further strengthen community capacity to cope with disaster risks,

Taking into account the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development[3] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation").[4]

Noting with interest the partnership initiatives voluntarily undertaken by some Governments, international organizations and major groups, and announced at the Summit,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;[5]

2. *Welcomes* the memorandum of understanding signed between the inter-agency secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the United Nations Development Programme, and encourages the secretariat to pursue the establishment of similar arrangements with other international organizations in order to improve synergies and clarify respective roles;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in reporting to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, to provide specific proposals to Member States for the implementation of the actions on this matter agreed to by the World Summit on Sustainable Development in its Plan of Implementation;[4]

4. *Decides* to take a decision on how to conclude the review of the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action[6] at its fifty-eighth session;

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[2] A/56/68, E/2001/63 and Corr.1, para. 14.

[3] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[4] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

[5] A/57/190.

[6] A/CONF.172/9, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General, with the assistance of the inter-agency secretariat for the Strategy, to plan and coordinate, in consultation with Governments and relevant organizations of the United Nations system, including international financial institutions, the 2004 review of the Yokohama Strategy and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session in this regard;

6. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to allocate adequate financial and administrative resources, within existing resources, for the effective functioning of the inter-agency secretariat for the Strategy;

7. *Encourages* the international community to provide the necessary financial resources to the Trust Fund for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and to provide the necessary scientific, technical, human and other resources to ensure adequate support for the activities of the inter-agency secretariat for the Strategy and the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction and its working groups;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

78th plenary meeting
20 December 2002